

REMARKS

The present application has been carefully studied and amended in view of the outstanding Office Action dated June 30, 2004, and the application is now believed to be in condition for allowance for the following reasons.

As noted in the outstanding Office Action, claim 5 is directed to allowable subject matter. Claims 5 has now been rewritten in independent form and is therefore believed to be in condition for formal allowance.

The remaining claims in this application comprise claim 1 and dependent claim 4. Claim 1 has been amended to recite that the seals stop with the membrane. The advantages of this feature were previously argued in support of patentability, but the Examiner was of the opinion that the scope of claim 1 was not commensurate with these arguments. Accordingly, as indicated above, claim 1 has been amended to specifically recite this feature which is clearly unsuggested by the prior art as argued by applicant and as noted by the Examiner. In the outstanding Office Action the Examiner indicates that the addition of this limitation would place the claim in condition for allowance over the '593 reference.

Accordingly, for the reasons discussed above it is believed that the present application is in condition for allowance and early notice to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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